

Frankenstein Reading Assignment: Chapters 17-24

1. Analyze and explain how the following statement made by Victor Frankenstein at the end of chapter 23 relates to Mary Shelly's subtitle, "The Modern Prometheus":

"Man," I cried, "how ignorant art thou in thy pride of wisdom! Cease; you know not what it is you say."

2. Identify and explain how a quotation from the end of chapter 24 supports the following analysis written by the literary critic Harold Bloom:

"Though abhorred rather than loved, the monster is the total form of Frankenstein's creative power and is more imaginative than his creator. The monster is at once more intellectual and more emotional than his maker; indeed he excels Frankenstein as much (and in the same ways) as Milton's Adam excels Milton's God in Paradise Lost. The greatest paradox and most astonishing achievement of Mary Shelly's novel is that the monster is more human than his creator. The nameless being, as much a Modern Adam as his creator is a Modern Prometheus, is more lovable than his creator and more hateful, more to be pitied and more to be feared, and above all more able to give the attentive reader that shock of added consciousness in which aesthetic recognition compels a heightened realization of the self. Frankenstein and his monster are the solipsistic and generous halves of the one self. Frankenstein is the mind and emotions turned in upon themselves, and his creature is the mind and emotions turned imaginatively outward, seeking a greater humanization through a confrontation of other selves."

3. Why does the monster commit his final act?

What is the symbolic meaning of how he commits this act?